

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 BRIDGE 00144 180206Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 ACDA-12 MCE-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01
DOTE-00 FMC-01 CG-00 DLOS-09 OES-07 USIE-00
NSCE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 /102 W
-----036958 180225Z /63

O 172007Z JAN 78

FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4471

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BRIDGETOWN 0144

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, ELAB, AC, US

SUBJECT: CARGO ON MILITARY CHARTER VESSEL CAUSES PROBLEMS IN ANTIGUA

1. CARIBBEAN NEWS AGENCY (CANA) CIRCULATED STORY JANUARY 16 THAT THE SHIP CHARTERED BY THE MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND TO CARRY SUPPLIES FOR USG DEFENSE INSTALLATIONS IN ANTIGUA AND BARBADOS ARRIVED IN ANTIGUA ON JANUARY 13 WITH CONTAINERS CONSIGNED TO SPACE RESEARCH CORPORATION (SRC) ALONG WITH ITS REGULAR CARGO. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT SRC IS A CANADIAN-BASED PRIVATE COMPANY SUPPOSEDLY INVOLVED IN ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH THAT INVOLVES GUN PROBES FROM SITES IN BARBADOS AND ANTIGUA (SINCE 1976).

2. GENERAL CHARGES LEVELED IN OCTOBER 1977 THAT ARMS SHIPMENTS FOR SOUTH AFRICA AND RHODESIA WERE PASSING THROUGH ANTIGUA WERE EXPANDED UPON BY THE OPPOSITION ANTIGUA WORKERS UNION (AWU) IN NOVEMBER INTO SPECIFIC CHARGES THAT SRC WAS DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE ARMS TRAFFICKING. THOUGH THE ANTIGUA GOVERNMENT OF PREMIER VERE BIRD ANNOUNCED THAT ITS INVESTIGATION OF THE ALLEGED ARMS SHIPMENTS SHOWED THAT WHAT WERE THOUGHT TO BE ARMS WERE ACTUALLY PROJECTILES FOR SRC TESTING PROJECTS, THE AWU DID

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 BRIDGE 00144 180206Z

NOT ACCEPT THE GOVERNMENT INVESTIGATION AS CONCLUSIVE, INSTEAD IT ANNOUNCED IT HAD EVIDENCE THAT THE SRC WAS INVOLVED IN SHIPPING ARMS AND INFORMED ANTIGUA PORT OFFICIALS AND SHIPPING AGENTS AS EARLY AS DECEMBER 6 THAT IT WAS IMPOSING AN EMBARGO AGAINST ALL GOODS CONSIGNED TO SRC.

3. IN LETTERS DATED JANUARY 11 TO THE COMMANDING OFFICERS OF

THE NAVAL FACILITY AND AIR FORCE TRACKING STATION IN ANTIGUA, THE AWU GENERAL SECRETARY KEITHLYN SMITH POINTED OUT THE EXISTENCE OF THE EMBARGO AND IN A TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH THE EMBASSY ON JANUARY 13 PARTICULARLY NOTED THE REAL POTENTIAL FOR AN INCIDENT OR WORK ACTION INVOLVING WORKERS AT THE MILITARY INSTALLATIONS SHOULD SRC CONSIGNED GOODS BE UNLOADED.

4. AFTER DISCUSSIONS WITH OFFICIALS AT THE ANTIGUA AIR FORCE TRACKING STATION, THE EMBASSY ADVISED THAT SRC GOODS NOT BE UNLOADED ON JANUARY 13 OFF THE CHARTERED SHIP STARTREK. ACCORDING TO THE CANA NEWS REPORT, STATION MANAGER JAMES EDWARDS SAID HE DID NOT ALLOW HIS MEN TO UNLOAD THE SRC GOODS AND FURTHER THAT HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND HOW THE GOODS OF A PRIVATE COMPANY ENDED UP ON A SHIP CHARTED BY THE MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND. THE ARTICLE ALSO QUOTED ANTIGUA SHIPPING AGENTS THAT NORMALLY HANDLE THE STARTREK SHIPMENTS AS BEING IGNORANT OF HOW THE SRC CARGO GOT ON BOARD. THE AIR FORCE COMMANDING OFFICER AT THE STATION HAS TOLD THE EMBASSY THAT NONE OF THE SRC CONSIGNMENT WAS FOR HIS OPERATION BUT WAS FOR AN SRC OPERATION IN ANTIGUA OF WHICH HE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE. THE CANA REPORT STATED THAT THE SRC CARGO WAS EVENTUALLY OFFLOADED AT SRC INSTALLATION ON CRABBES PENINSULA ON ANTIGUA'S NORTHEAST COAST.

5. COMMENT/ THIS INCIDENT HAS A HIGH POTENTIAL FOR SERIOUS EMBARRASSMENT OF THE USG. THAT SRC CONSIGNED GOODS TURN UP ON A MILITARY CHARTERED VESSEL OF THE US AT A TIME WHEN THE SRC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 BRIDGE 00144 180206Z

STANDS ACCUSED IN ANTIGUA OF SHIPPING ARMS TO THE WHITE MINORITY REGIMES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA IS SUSPICIOUS TO WEST INDIANS. THAT THE SRC SHIPS GOODS VIA THIS MILITARY CHARTERED VESSEL THAT IS NORMALLY UNLOADED AT A PIER AWAY FROM ANTIGUA'S MAIN HARBOR AND AWAY FROM THE AWU DOCK WORKERS GIVES THE APPEARANCE THAT THERE IS USG COMPLICITY IN BREAKING THE AWU EMBARGO.

6. ACTION REQUESTED. THE EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE A TIMELY EXPLANATION OF HOW THE CARGO OF A PRIVATE CANADIAN-BASED FIRM WAS SHIPPED ON THE STARTREK; A STATEMENT OF WHAT WAS IN THE CONTAINERS CONSIGNED TO SRC; ANY LIGHT THE DEPARTMENT MAY SHED ON SPACE RESEARCH CORPORATION AND ITS OPERATIONS; ANY OTHER GUIDANCE THE DEPARTMENT MAY FEEL IS APPROPRIATE. STARTREK IS DUE IN BARBADOS JANUARY 17, WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INTERIM INFORMATION BEFORE COB ON JANUARY 17 SINCE LOCAL MEDIA HAS ALREADY ASKED NAVAL FACILITY BARBADOS FOR COMMENT. EDDY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LABOR UNIONS, ALLEGATIONS, ARMS SMUGGLING
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BRIDGE00144
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780025-0926
Format: TEL
From: BRIDGETOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780157/aaaabvpy.tel
Line Count: 112
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: edd5cfe2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3765124
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CARGO ON MILITARY CHARTER VESSEL CAUSES PROBLEMS IN AN- TIGUA
TAGS: MARR, ELAB, AC, US, RH, SF, SPACE RESEARCH CORP, ANTIGUA WORKERS UNION
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/edd5cfe2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014